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RULES AND REGULATIONS.

The residents of Whittier Hall are young women presumably interested in university study and capable of self-direction. The rules and regulations, therefore, are intended to facilitate, rather than to check, free social intercourse of a wholesome and helpful character. The aim of the management is to make the social life of the residents altogether agreeable. To this end each person is urged to assist in promoting the general welfare of all, and to restrain personal desires and prejudices whenever they tend to interfere with the rights and happiness of others.

A rational plan of self-government will receive hearty encouragement.

(To be continued.)

**THE CAMPAIGN FOR REGISTRATION OF NURSES
IN NEW YORK STATE**

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THE profession of nursing in the United States will, it is believed, have reason to consider the year nineteen hundred and three as a year that marks an epoch in its history. In this year the nursing profession received its first substantial recognition from five of the Legislatures in the United States.*

At first glance it may appear that this recognition is a tardy one, and that it has been achieved in the face of obstacles of a more formidable nature than were to be expected. However, as a matter of fact, the nurses have obtained recognition for their profession with much less difficulty and in a much shorter time than have the members of other professions. To be sure, the nurses benefited by the experience of the older professions and had many models from which to plan, but the fact remains that, making due allowance for all of these advantages, the nursing profession has accomplished a great deal in a short space of time.

The medical profession found that it required in New York State almost one hundred years before the proper standard could be established by law. The profession of dentistry likewise had a long preliminary struggle. For the most part, the lawmakers of our country have been strangely reluctant to establish high standards of education in the professions, and the nurses are to be congratulated upon the success which

* In one State, Illinois, the bill was subsequently vetoed by the Governor.

they have achieved in the length of time during which they have made a serious effort at recognition.

The purpose of this article is to describe briefly and in a general way the nature of those laws providing for the examination and registration of practitioners of the learned professions.

It is needless to say that each State has its own separate system, growing out of its own separate needs and conditions. But for the most part the laws of the different States follow a definite plan and are designed to accomplish ends practically the same. They differ in many minor details, and the standards of education which they require vary, of course, in accordance with the enlightenment of the State passing the law.

New York has perhaps a more complete system of laws regulating the professions than any other State in the Union, and it is generally acknowledged that its standards of education are higher than the standards in nearly all the other States.

A brief review, therefore, of the professional laws of New York State will serve as indicating the main points generally found in such laws. It is a pleasure to be able to say in this connection that an analysis of the so-called "Nurse's Bill" recently passed by the New York Legislature and now a law will bring out the salient features of our laws regulating the professions.

By this it must not be understood that this law is a perfect one or all that the nurses desire, because in many details it will, no doubt, be changed in time, but the main features of the law are permanent and admirably adapted for maintaining the standard demanded of those to whom is entrusted the care of the sick.

BRIEF OUTLINE OF LAWS GOVERNING TRADES AND PROFESSIONS

The refinements of modern civilization are such that the admission to the practice of the most important trades and professions requiring skill and professional training is regulated by law. In a general way these laws provide for certain preliminary training, followed by an examination or test before an authorized Board of Examiners. A license is granted by the statutory board when the requirements for admission have been complied with. These licenses are required to be registered in a public office, and not until such registration has been accomplished does the right of the person licensed to carry on his profession or trade become complete.

Definite penalties for violation of provisions of the law are always included, and in many instances the right to enforce the law is secured to some incorporated body composed of members of the profession affected

by the law. A definition of what constitutes the practice of the profession in question is oftentimes included so as to remove all doubts as to the scope of its provisions. These regulations apply with more or less force to the professions of law, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, and public accounting, to which must now be added the profession of nursing.

BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE NEW YORK LAW REGULATING THE PRACTICE OF NURSING.

The main point of difference between the law regulating the practice of nursing and the laws regulating other professions in New York State lies in the fact that the former bill does not attempt to prevent anyone from practising the art of nursing. Its purpose is to establish the title of "registered nurse" and to prevent anyone who is not registered from using that title. The so-called natural nurse will be permitted to ply her vocation as heretofore, but by giving a definite meaning to the title "registered nurse" the public is enabled to differentiate the skilled nurse from the unskilled nurse. The future alone can decide whether or not it will ever be wise to entirely prohibit the practice of nursing without examination and registration. No attempt was made to have the New York law cover this point, and by common consent it is left to future discussion and consideration.

STANDARD OF PRELIMINARY TRAINING.

The bill stipulates that applicants for registration must be residents of New York State over the age of twenty-one years, and of good moral character, holding a diploma from a training-school connected with a hospital or sanitarium giving at least a two-years' course, and registered with the Regents as maintaining proper standards. Just what these standards are to be is yet to be determined, but the policy of the Regents is always to elevate rather than to lower, and in creating these standards the Regents will advise with the Board of Examiners, which will be composed of nurses who have been selected because of their ability and fair judgment.

THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS AND RECOGNITION OF NEW YORK STATE NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

The bill as originally introduced by Senator Armstrong provided for a Board of Examiners consisting of five nurses, the members of said board to be selected by the Regents of the University of the State of New York from ten names nominated by the New York State Nurses' Association.

The opposition centred its efforts on this provision of the law.

In the first place, it was claimed that the New York State Nurses' Association did not represent more than twelve hundred nurses out of several thousand in the State. The answer was that while that might be true, it did represent a very large percentage of nurses whose preliminary training and education was of such a character as to make them worthy of the name of trained nurse.

It was then pointed out that the standard established by the by-laws of the New York State Nurses' Association in reference to admission to membership was so high as to bar many nurses from the State, who could therefore never be eligible to the Board of Examiners. This criticism was met promptly by the offer on the part of the association to make its by-laws in reference to membership read that any nurses registered under the proposed act should be eligible to membership.

It was further pointed out that the fight of the New York State Nurses' Association resulted largely from some personal differences which a former member of the association had with the association itself.

Then the opposition claimed that no association should be given the right to nominate a Board of Examiners. In attacking this provision of the law our opponents soon found that they were attacking a system which has been in existence in New York State for many years and which has proved entirely satisfactory. The Board of Examiners for the three schools of medicine are nominated from the three societies of physicians representing the respective schools. The dental examiners are nominated in the same way. This system works admirably in the cases of these professions, and the nurses argued that no good reason could be shown why an exception should be made against their organization.

Beaten in all of these points, the opposition made its last stand by demanding that doctors should be put upon the Examining Board along with the nurses. They were not quite prepared to openly charge that in their opinion the nurses were incompetent to constitute a board, but they insinuated that the success of the Board of Examiners would be much more certain if physicians were permitted to be members thereof.

The nurses and their friends then showed that it was impossible for a nurse to be graduated without the supervision of the physician. The medical man is an important factor in the training-school for nurses, and the latter could not get diplomas or qualify as graduated nurses unless members of the medical profession approved their qualifications. It is also well known that three members of the Board of Regents are physicians, and as the questions for the examination are decided at last by the Regents, it was shown that in this way the medical profession was still represented in the measure. It was also argued that to have physicians on the board immediately introduced medical politics into the situation

and compelled the nurses to recognize the three schools of medicine, when, as a matter of fact, the differences in materia medica as observed by the three schools is a matter with which the nurses have nothing to do.

These answers to the objections were urged with such force by the splendid delegations that appeared before the committees of the Assembly and Senate that what seemed at first a very formidable opposition was very shortly put to rout.

The hands of the nurses were upheld in their splendid fight by many prominent members of the medical profession, and especially by Dr. Frank Van Fleet, chairman of the Committee on Legislation of the Medical Society of the State of New York. He and numerous other physicians appeared in opposition to the claim that doctors should be upon the Examining Board for nurses, and their arguments were presented with such force and clearness that the opposition was stilled. The bill as finally passed provides for a Board of Examiners composed entirely of nurses, and the examiners are selected from the nurses of the New York State Nurses' Association. Thus was continued the principle heretofore established of confining the examiners of each profession to members of that profession. In addition, the recognition given to the New York State Nurses' Association was as complete as the high standing of that association deserves.

No definition of the practice of nursing was placed in the present act, but a clause was added that nothing in it should be construed as giving a nurse the right to practice medicine.

It should not be forgotten in this connection that the question of the status of a midwife in law becomes more and more anomalous by the passage of this act. Hitherto it has been claimed that the midwife should be granted a license because she is not a physician but a nurse. If in the future the midwife makes this claim, she should be compelled to qualify as a registered nurse.

ENFORCEMENT OF THE ACT.

A violation of the provisions of the act is made a misdemeanor. Complete recognition of the association was given in a section of the law which provides that the fines resulting from any prosecution instigated by said association shall be returned to it to an extent necessary to enable it to pay the expenses of the prosecution. This is in line with the provisions of the medical law giving the medical societies the same right. It is hoped that after the law has been in operation and the nurses begin to register that the State Association can take up its practical enforcement and prevent it from becoming a dead letter.

One of the direct benefits to the public resulting from the passage

of the Nurses' Bill must be the raising of the standard of training-schools. While in one sense this is an indirect result of the law, it is, nevertheless, one of its most beneficent results. When those desiring to enter the nursing profession learn that before they can stand an examination for the title of registered nurse they must take a course of training in a training-school maintaining a standard approved by the Regents of the University of the State of New York they will be very careful to enter only such schools as meet this requirement. In this way the correspondence schools and the so-called schools conducted by individual physicians with regard for their own convenience and with little regard for the future of the nurse will find great difficulty in securing recruits, and the tendency will be to either force them out of business or to compel them to increase their standards until they are schools in fact as well as in name.

No account of the movement to pass the Nurses' Bill is complete without a tribute to the skill, energy, and discretion with which the nurses of New York State went about securing the enactment of the desired law. Though having little experience in legislative matters, they readily adapted themselves to the rapidly changing situations, and every move of their opponents was met in a masterly manner. The strongest argument they could possibly advance in support of their contention that nurses were competent to act as their own examiners was made in a most practical manner when they demonstrated their ability to secure the passage of a law which many organized professions confined to men would have found great difficulty in securing. The self-sacrifice and devotion to the principle involved manifested by those nurses who were in charge of the legislative work deserve the highest praise, and it is not extravagant to say that the profession of nursing throughout the United States owes a debt of gratitude to those through whose efforts the bill was passed.

VISITING NURSES' SETTLEMENT, ORANGE, N. J.

OWING to certain changes which will take place in this settlement the first of May, it seems desirable to issue a brief statement of the work as it is and as it is to be. During the month of March over five hundred professional visits were made and a large number refused, owing to the limited number of nurses on duty. Forty-six dressings were made at the home, and a young invalid was received as a visitor for two weeks to recuperate from a serious illness. This month of active service makes the steady progress of the work of the Nurses' Settlement, which is now, as it ever has been, primarily the offering of hourly nursing to all classes